

**Virginia Regiment War Council, June 28, 1754,  
Proceedings, Letters to Washington and Accompanying  
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***Minutes of a Council of War held at Gists Plant". [Washington's handwriting].***

At a Council of War held at Mr. Gists June 28th. 1754

After the Junction with our own Detachmt. and the Independent Company To Consider what was most prudent & necessary to be Done in the present Situation of Affairs: It was Unanimously Resolved that it was Absolutly necessary to Return to our Fort at the meadows & Wait there until Supply'd with a stock of provisions Sufficient to serve us for some months.

The Reasons for so doing were very Weighty:

Monacatootha<sup>1</sup> a man of Sense and Experience & agreed friend to the English Had left the French Fort only two days before & had seen the Reinforcmt. arrive & heard them declare their Resolution to march and Attack the English tw 800 of their own men & 400 Indians.

There was a Reinforcemt. hourly expected, we learned from French Deserters.

We knew, that two of our own men had deserted to them and acquainted The Enemy of our Starving Condition and our Numbrs. & Situation.

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We had wanted meat & bread for six days already; and were still uncertain when any would arrive. We had only about 25 head of Live Cattle the most of them Milch Cows to depend upon, for 400 men, and about one quart of salt to use wt. our Meat, or preserve it.

The Enemy being thrice our Number & knowing our Circumstances would not give us a Chance to fight them, but Strive to starve us out by intercepting our Convoys. The Live Cattle were Uncertain as the Enemy strove to Block us up. If the Enemy were so Void of knowledge in Military Affairs as to Risk a Battle, We must give a Total defeat to thrice our Number,—Otherwise be Cut to pieces by so prodigious a Number of their Indians in our Retreat, who are the best people in the World to improve a Victory and at the best lose all our Warlike Stores & Swivles. Compell'd by these Reasons it was Unanimously Resolv'd to Decamp directly, and to have our swivles drawn By the men by Reason of the Scarcity of horses.

Besides the Indians declar'd that they would leave us, unless we Returnd to ye Meadows. The distance Between that & Mr. Gist's house, is thirteen miles of hilly road form'd Naturally for Ambushes. The French could not so Easily Support themselves at the Meadow as at Gist's, by reason of distance to Carry the Stores and Provisions & their want of horses to do it. They can come within five miles of Gist's house by water; thirteen miles further of bad Road was a Great obstruction to them & gave us an Opportunity of Obtaining intelligence, & Securing our Convoys. While we lay at Gist's house They might pass us unobserved by a different Road from Red Stone that Lay about nine miles from us. But at the Meadows, both Roads are United, and the Bearing of the Mountains makes it difficult for an Enemy to come near or pass us without Receiving Advice of it. From all these Considerations this Resolves was Signed by [Signatures wanting].

1 Monacattoocho or Monacatootha, also known as Scarroyaddy, and earlier, to 1748, as Skwoniatta, was an Oneida chief, one of the mixed band of the various tribes of the Six Nations, who, in 1754, lived near the Ohio. He served in the expedition of Braddock [at whose defeat his son was killed], and was through life a staunch ally of the English.—BROCK.